

Girl Scout Cookie 101

An introductory guide for new volunteers!



Welcome to the Girl Scout Cookie Program!

You are joining a more than 100-year tradition that includes thousands of girls and adults. Our goal is to give you an overview of the Cookie Program so that you feel ready to jump into the fun and adventure. Are you ready?

Why do Girl Scouts sell Girl Scout Cookies?

Girl Scouts sell Girl Scout Cookies to earn proceeds to support their activities, trips, service projects, and more. When they join the Cookie Program, girls also learn five essential life skills:

Goal Setting

Your Girl Scout will learn how to set a goal and make a plan to succeed. Once she sells cookies, her goal-setting skill set will help her in school! She won't come to you the night before a project is due and needing supplies; she will already have a plan and schedule mapped out to get her project done ahead of time.

Decision Making

She will know how to consider different factors that will influence her choice carefully. This skill will become handy when she is looking ahead to her future like picking a college and making a plan to apply!

Money Management

After managing funds in the Cookie Program, she will then have the experience needed to save her allowance to buy a new phone, and then to pay for her phone bill each month. How does that sound?

People Skills

Learning people skills will serve your Girl Scout well in school, in her career, and in her life. Everyone wants to interact with someone who knows how to listen attentively, make her point persuasively, and build consensus.

Business Ethics

Selling cookies will teach your Girl Scout to honor commitments. She will demonstrate the ability to be a leader who people gravitate to for guidance.

Key Players & Resources

The **Troop Product Manager (TPM)** is the Troop volunteer who manages the Cookie Program for the Troop. Working with the Troop Leader, she/he will train the girls and parents on the Cookie Program, place the Troop's orders and any re-orders, track the cookies given to girls and their parents, schedule booths, and order and distribute the rewards.

The TPM is supported by the **Service Unit Product Manager (SUPM)**, who is a volunteer in your Service Unit (local community of Troops). The SUPM will train your Troop's TPM, offer guidance and reminders of due dates, share communications from the council product program team, and answer questions. She/he will coordinate the delivery of cookies to the Troop and distribute the rewards at the end of the program. The SUPM is a vital contact for a TPM.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois (GSEIWI) offers many resources online to inform girls, parents, and volunteers about the Cookie Program. Every registered girl will receive a copy of the Family Guide, which lists important information such as dates, ways to sell cookies, and rules and guidelines. It is a great resource to use at the family meeting to prepare for the Cookie Program.

TPM's will receive frequent communications from their SUPM! We also recommend you have [Cookie Connections](#) as a handy reference. Additional resources include:

Parent Permission Form, which each girl must have signed and on file with the Troop
Cookie Bites email newsletter
[Online training videos](#)
[Volunteer Essentials](#)
[Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)

All resources are available on www.girlscoutstoday.org in the Cookies+ section.

Calendar Overview

TPM's get trained in November or December, and then in January, things really start moving with cookie season!

December	Volunteer training eBudde (online Cookie Program management system) opens Digital Cookie opens and girls may take preorders
January	Cookie Rallies for girl training Cookie Booth online scheduler opens Troop Initial Order due
February	Cookies are delivered to Service Units In-hand cookie sales and Cookie Booths begin Cookie Cupboards open
March	Cookie Program ends Review Troop allocations, transfers, Care to Share numbers, and rewards Final ACH debit from Troop bank account
April	Cookie rewards distributed Cookie Celebrations for girls

Meet the Cookies

Two bakers in the United States are licensed to bake Girl Scout Cookies. One is ABC Baker, and the other baker is Little Brownie Baker. Our council uses Little Brownie Baker!

Each Girl Scout Council decides which baker to partner with, and you may find that people ask for cookie flavors with names that you don't recognize. These are probably from the other baker and are not sold by local girls.

Traditional (\$5/package)



Thin Mints

Iconic chocolate cookie covered in minty chocolate. Thin Mints are vegan.



Tagalongs

Everyone's favorite pairing of chocolate and peanut butter.



Samoas

A combination of caramel, toasted coconut, and dark chocolate.



Trefoils

Traditional shortbread cookies. Delightfully simple and satisfying!



Do-si-Dos

Peanut butter sandwiched between two oatmeal cookies.



Lemon-Ups

Crispy lemon cookies baked with inspiring messages to lift your spirits.



S'mores

Graham cookies that sandwich chocolate and marshmallow filling.

Specialty (\$6/package)

Our specialty cookie has a higher price point because of the higher cost of ingredients and production.



Toffee-Tastic

Buttery gluten-free cookie with toffee bits.

Care to Share (C2S) is our council-wide community service program. Customers purchase a package of cookies to be donated to one of our Care to Share partners: Riverbend Troop Support, Iowa's Bravest, and Soldier's Angels. Girls collect and turn in the payment and receive credit for the cookies. Each Troop tracks the donations, then GSEWI will distribute the cookies to the Care to Share partners. The Troop, girl, and customer never touch the package!

Ways to get Cookies

eBudde is Little Brownie Baker's online Cookie Program management system. The TPM will use eBudde to order cookies, assign them to girls, record payments, schedule booths, and order rewards.

The first, and very important, way to order cookies is through the **Initial Order**. GSEIWI recommends that each troop order at least 75% of their projected sales right upfront. We have a great tool, **Cookie Calculator Worksheet**, found on www.girlscoutstoday.org, that can help Troops decide what to order. It's critical to order enough cookies in the Initial Order so that you don't have to wait in long lines to restock your supply. Each Troop will set their Initial Order based on the girls' goals and interest in participating in the Cookie Program. Troops may not insist that girls take a certain quantity of cookies—it's a family decision. For families to have a better idea of what they will need, they may begin to take preorders through Digital Cookie and paper order cards in late December.

Your SUPM will tell your TPM when and where to pick up the Initial Order, just before the Cookie Program begins. When girls have cookies in-hand to fill orders, they can also order extra to sell cookies directly to customers without taking orders.

Cookie Cupboards are locations where additional cookies are stored for Troops to add to their inventory. If your Troop needs more cookies after receiving your Initial Order, the TPMs must place an order for the cookies in eBudde and find the most convenient cupboard location.

During certain days, Troops will also have the opportunity to return full, unopened cases of cookies that they have checked out for Cookie Booth sales. Damaged cookies may be replaced at any cupboard during operating hours.

Another way to get more cookies is to **transfer** them from another Troop. Just let Troops know what you are looking for, and if they have excess cookies, you can transfer the cookies and the financial responsibility to you. Likewise, if you have too many cookies, let other Troops know what you have, and you may be able to transfer them to another Troop.

Ways to Market Cookies

Girls have several options for promoting their cookie businesses to family and friends!

Text, phone, and email are easy and quick ways to reach out to personal contacts.

Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are a great way to let a wide net of people know that cookies are available. Girls must never share personal information, such as phone number, email address, physical address, though. Girl Scout Cookies may not be listed on resale sites such as Craigslist, eBay, and Facebook Marketplace.

GSEIWI Shops carry a variety of colorful, cute, and creative marketing items to help draw attention and boost sales. Or your Troop can get creative on Pinterest!

Ways to Sell Cookies

Just like a regular business, girls have multiple options for selling Girl Scout Cookies!

Walkabouts

When she has cookies in-hand, decorate a wagon, and take cookies door-to-door in residential neighborhoods.

Lemonade Stands

Set up a booth at her house or another close relative's home to sell cookies directly to neighborhood customers.

Digital Cookie

Digital Cookie is an online platform where girls can send secure emails to friends and family. Customers may purchase cookies with a credit card for direct shipment, donation (Care to Share), or girl-delivery. Digital Cookie links can be shared with friends and family and on public-facing sites such as neighborhood groups. Girl Scout Cookies may not be listed on resale sites such as Craigslist, eBay, and Facebook Marketplace.

Workplace Sales

Girls can get permission to sell to employees of a workplace, but not the customers. If mom, dad, or another relative takes an order card to work, make sure the Girl Scout is involved by putting together a flyer, stopping by the office for a pitch, or delivering the cookies to thank her customers directly for their orders.

In-Person Cookie Booths

Girls can sell cookies in public spaces like at sporting events, local retailers, and restaurants. Of course, they need to get permission and work within the guidelines set by the organization. Cookie Booths are the public face of the Girl Scout Program, and girls and adults must represent our organization well.

Booths are approved by GSEIWI or the SUPM and scheduled in eBudde. If you would like to schedule a booth somewhere that is not listed in eBudde, you may schedule the booth in eBudde and submit it for approval. When you sign up for a booth, the information is transmitted immediately to the Cookie Locator, an app for customers to use to find booths in their area.

Virtual Cookie Booths

Social distancing? Host a Virtual Cookie Booth on social media! Your Troop can use an online payment system such as Clover, PayPal, or Venmo to accept payments, then set up contactless delivery or pick up sites.

PGA

Per-Girl Average (PGA) is the average number of packages girls sell. This number is calculated by taking the total packages sold divided by total girls in the Troop that are selling. We encourage each girl to set her goal at selling 200 boxes of cookies. Some choose to sell more or less, but girls who reach the 200 box goal will experience every benefit of the program. From trying different methods of selling to achieving some amazing prizes!

Finance

Cookies are paid for at the time of delivery to the customer. This means that the Troop does not pay for the cookies upfront, nor do the girls. Troops should collect money from parents and deposit them into the Troop account promptly and frequently. Troops may take electronic payments from parents to then deposit into the Troop account as well. Troops may take payments from customers via cash, check, credit card, and other online payment providers like Clover, PayPal, and Venmo.

GSEIWI will debit each troop twice via **ACH**. The first debit will occur about a week after Cookie Booths begin, so troops should have plenty of time to deposit funds to cover the debit. The second debit will occur around ten days after the conclusion of the Cookie Program. Dates will be published in Cookie Connections!

TPMs will assign cookies to the girls in eBudde, as well as track payments from girls. This will allow TPMs to see balances owed and will give the girls credit towards their rewards.

Troop Proceeds & Awards

Troops earn .65/package of Girl Scout Cookies. Girls also receive individual rewards based on the number of packages sold by each girl. The rewards are voted on by girls every year, and there is always something for everyone.

Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador (grades 6-12) Troops may decide to **opt-out of rewards** to earn an additional .10/package. Girls in these Troops are still eligible for some reward items.

Troops that have a Per Girl Average (PGA) of 190-224 packages earn an extra .05/package, and Troops with a PGA of 225+ earn an extra .10/package.

Thank You

That's it! You are now versed in the basics of the Cookie Program. We hope you are ready to become part of this time-honored tradition that girls look forward to all year. Cookie Program trainings and other resources are available on our website, www.girlscoutstoday.org. You will have all the help and support you need to have a successful Cookie Program.